

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

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E.WO. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, TH

SUBJECT: ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS

REF: (A) BANGKOK 1759; (B) BANGKOK 0661

SUMMARY. PM KHUKRIT PRAMOT STATES TO PRESS CONFERENCE THAT HE BELIEVES DECREE RESTRICTING NUMBER OF POLITICAL PARTIES WILL PROBABLY NOT RPT NOT BE PUT INTO EFFECT. BANGKOK POST EDITOR-IN-CHIEF INTERVIEWS KHLAEO NORAPATI, LEADER OF SOCIALIST UNITED FRONT. SOCIAL ACTION PARTY (SAP) OFFICIAL EXPECTS ABOUT 50 EX-MP'S TO JOIN SAP. END SUMMARY.

1. DURING HIS JANUARY 27 NEWS CONFERENCE, PRIME MINISTER KHUKRIT PRAMOT SAID THAT THE PROPOSAL TO ISSUE A DECREE RESTRICTING THE NUMBER OF POLITICAL PARTIES WOULD PROBABLY NOT RPT NOT BE PUT INTO EFFECT. ACCORDING TO USIS TRANSLATION OF HIS COMMENTS HE ADDED, "MY VIEW IS THAT THIS DECREE LAW WILL MOST PROBABLY NOT BE PUT IN FORCE, BECAUSE IT WOULD BE RISKY, SINCE COMMENTS ARE BEING EXPRESSED THAT IT WOULD CONFLICT WITH THE CONSTITUTION. I HAVE A TENDENCY TO BE OF THAT VIEW ALSO."

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2. IN AN INTERVIEW WITH BANGKOK POST EDITOR-IN-CHIEF THEH

CHONGKHADIKIT, LEADER OF THE SOCIALIST UNITED FRONT (SUF), KHLAEO NORAPATI, DISCUSSED THE UPCOMING ELECTIONS, NAWAPHON AND THE NINE POINT SOCIALIST POLICY AGREED UPON BY THE SOCIALIST PARTY OF THAILAND (SPT), THE SUF AND THE NEW FORCE PARTY (NFP) DURING THE OPPOSITION'S ATTEMPT TO BRING DOWN THE KHUKRIT GOVERNMENT THREE WEEKS AGO. HE DID NOT SAY ANYTHING STARTLING OR ORIGINAL BUT HE MADE THE FOLLOWING POINTS.

3. ELECTIONS. KHLAEO SAID THAT HE BELIEVED THAT THE ELECTIONS WOULD BE HELD AND THAT ONLY A MILITARY COUP WOULD PREVENT THEM FROM TAKING PLACE. THE SUF IS HURTING FINANCIALLY. KHLAEO IS SELLING LAND THAT HE OWNS TO FINANCE THE CAMPAIGN. THE SUF WILL COOPERATE WITH LIKE-MINDED PARTIES SUCH AS THE SPT. A SUBCOMMITTEE IS LOOKING INTO THE EXTENT OF COOPERATION. KHLAEO PREDICTED THAT THE SUF WILL GAIN SEATS BUT WOULD NOT SAY HOW MANY. HE SAID THAT THE RIGHT WING GROUP, NAWAPHON, HAS EXPANDED ITS ACTIVITIES, ESPECIALLY IN THE NORTHEAST, WHERE THEY ARE MAKING A CONCERTED EFFORT TO KEEP SOCIALISTS FROM BEING ELECTED.

4. SOCIALIST POLICY. KHLAEO SAID THAT THE SUF, SPT AND NFP HAD AGREED ON A NINE POINT SOCIALIST POLICY, NOT THE TWELVE POINT PROGRAM PREVIOUSLY REPORTED. (REF B) THE NINE POINT POLICY IS NARROWER IN SCOPE BUT SIMILAR IN OUTLOOK AND INTENT. THESE NINE POINTS ARE:

A. IMPLEMENT LAND REFORM THROUGHOUT THE COUNTRY ON AN URGENT BASIS;

B. REDUCE FARMERS' DEBTS. EXPAND CREDITS THROUGH THE GOVERNMENT'S SAVINGS BANK AND THE BANK FOR AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATIVES;

C. IMPLEMENT GRADUAL GOVERNMENT TAKEOVER OF TRADE IN RICE, OTHER MAJOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS, AND NATURAL RESOURCES;

D. EXPAND CONSUMERS AND PRODUCERS COOPERATIVES AND COOPERATIVE STORES WITH GOVERNMENT SUPPORT IN THE FORM OF CREDIT;

E. ABOLISH THE ANTI-COMMUNIST ACTS WITHOUT SUBSTITUTING ANY NEW SUPPRESSION BILL. DISSOLVE ANY AGENCIES ESTABLISHED UNDER UNCLASSIFIED

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THE ANTI-COMMUNIST ACTS;

F. WITHDRAW ALL U.S. TROOPS BY MARCH 1976. WITHDRAW OTHER FOREIGN MILITARY FORCES IMMEDIATELY. ALSO INVALIDATE MILITARY AGREEMENTS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES.

(COMMENT: "OTHER FOREIGN MILITARY FORCES" APPARENTLY REFER TO KMT REMNANTS IN NORTHERN THAILAND. END COMMENT.);

G. AMEND THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION TO ALLOW THE RIGHT TO VOTE TO 18 YEARS OLDS AND THE RIGHT TO BE A CANDIDATE TO 23 YEAR OLDS. ABOLISH THE SENATE AND ALLOW PEOPLE COMPLETE POLITICAL FREEDOM;

H. NATIONALIZE INSURANCE COMPANIES; AND

I. ELIMINATE FOREIGN INFLUENCES IN ORDER TO ATTAIN COMPLETE INDEPENDENCE.

5. THE SOCIAL ACTION PARTY (SAP) SECRETARIAT OFFICIAL IN CHARGE OF RECRUITMENT TOLD AN EMBASSY OFFICER ON JANUARY 28 THAT THE SAP EXPECTS TO RECRUIT ABOUT 50 EX-MP'S FROM OTHER PARTIES. HE MENTIONED THAT BUNLOET LOETPRICHA, FORMER SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE SOCIAL JUSTICE PARTY (SJP), WHO HAD SAID HE MIGHT FORM HIS OWN PARTY (REF A) WOULD BRING WITH HIM 22 OTHER EX-MP'S FROM VARIOUS PARTIES; CHAISIRI RUANGKANCHANASET, OF THE PEOPLE'S JUSTICE PARTY, WITH ANOTHER 22 EX-MP'S; AND SAWAT KHAMPRAKOB, LEADER OF THE SOCIAL AGRARIAN PARTY, WITH 8 OTHERS.

6. COMMENT: PARTY ALIGNMENTS CONTINUE TO BE IN A HIGHLY FLUID STATE AND WILL NOT REPEAT NOT SETTLE DOWN UNTIL AFTER FULL LIST OF CANDIDATES IS KNOWN ABOUT FEBRUARY 19. REGISTRATION OF CANDIDATES IS PRESENTLY SCHEDULED FOR FEBRUARY 9-13. WHITEHOUSE

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